

**LOUDOUN COUNTY ANIMAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

Wednesday, February 23, 2011
Mickey Gordon Room 215
Depot Ct.
Leesburg, VA 20176

Committee Members Present:

Paul Popejoy, Sugarland Run, Chairman
Dr. Leslie Sinn DVM, Potomac, Vice Chairman
Donna S. Lewis, At-Large, Recording Secretary
Martha Rice, Broad Run
Joanne Dekker, Catocin

Committee Members Absent

Kathy Brice, Blue Ridge
Vacant, Dulles
Dr. Michael Strickland DVM, Leesburg
Paul Dodaro, Sterling

LCACC Staff Present:

Thomas Koenig, Director
Donna Levesque, Administrative Manager
Kim Miller, Animal Control Officer
Laura Rizer, Public Relations

Public Present: None

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, Paul Popejoy, at 7:14 p.m.
The minutes from the December 15, 2010 meeting were presented. The minutes were accepted as written (5-0-4).

Public Comment: None

DIRECTOR UPDATE:

The 2010-2011 Virginia Comprehensive Animal Law Handbooks were handed out.

There is an updated Animal Advisory Committee list and it is included in the January packets.

The Holiday Coalition Pet Pantry was extremely organized this year. The number of pets served was 905 and 449 families (almost 2 pets per family). It was a very successful venture with the ACO taking the lead in organizing this year effort.

Every year the DMV license plate funds are sent to the localities. The received funds will be sent to Loudoun County Humane Society (RFP awarded contract) to run a Spay/Neuter program for the 2011 year.

The 6 horses have been transferred to Roanoke Horse Rescue. It went very smooth and the Rescue is starting to work with them. Another horse was received “At Large” but was successfully returned to its owner.

Nuisance Ordinance – referred to Subcommittee

A flyer for the Fairfax County Animal Shelter Trap Neuter Release Program was handed out. The Fairfax shelter is running this program. They are adopting outdoor cats to designated owners. Fairfax serves as facilitator and does not trap or intake these cats. State Vet has adopted a “wait until a complaint” stance. One question raised is how the Fairfax Shelter knows that only feral cats are being trapped. The intent of the program is well meaning and reduces euthanasia. The people sign an agreement for release, assumption of risk, and a managed colony caretaker acknowledgement. There is active participation from the community and they have received positive feed back. The funding comes from DMV Spay/Neuter funds. Feral cats are a very hot issue throughout Virginia. Every year there is a push to change the law on how feral cats are handled in Virginia.

The Department name change came about to reflect all the services performed and to be more consistent with other departments. There are 5 spots within Ordinance 612 that would require change. There has also been a new Mission Statement written. The cost of the name changes will be built into the budget. To reduce cost, when vehicles, uniforms, stationery, etc. come due for replacement, the name change will then be made. There will be a design competition for a new logo.

Motion: The AAC concurs with the recommended name change from The Department of Animal Care and Control to The Department of Animal Services. (Motion: Sinn, 2nd. Dekker). **Passed** (5-0-4).

There has been a reorganization of the Shelter effective March 1, 2011. The document was handed out and discussed. The Shelter Manager position has been split into two components: Shelter Administrator and Animal Care Manager. Several other titles have been renamed. On the right hand side of the chart: The Community Relations Manager will now be involved with the Outreach efforts and will also oversee the Volunteer Coordinator and the Customer Service/Dispatchers. This new vertical structure permits a career track and the ability to recruit qualified applicants. On the left hand side of the chart: These positions were restructured for succession planning. Many staff are cross trained.

A statement on the Corona virus outbreak was handed out. Strict protocol was followed and the complete facility, including vehicles, was disinfected and treated. The Department has discussed this type of outbreak and how best to handle it in the future. All the cat areas are closed with the expectation of reopening on March 5. The Department will update the AAC on any new measures instituted to Department protocols in light of this Corona virus outbreak.

Animal Control – Officer Miller

An unusual hording situation took up staff time for most of the month. In addition to the cats, fowl, exotic birds, emus, rabbits, zebras, and dogs were found. The family got rid of most all through private individuals and auctions. It took fifteen days to trap the 46 cats that came to the shelter. The home was condemned by the Fire Marshal until the property was totally cleaned up. The Sheriff and FBI were also involved.

Animal Shelter – Laura Rizer

There was no puppy euthanasia in either January or February. The kittens in December were all feral or medical. The January cat intake and euthanasia is up due to the seized cat colony spanning January and February.

Trends to note: Rescue transfers have almost doubled (29 to 47) in the past year and more than tripled since Fiscal 07 when emphasis on transfers to rescue groups was made a focus. Returns from adoption have decreased by 51% since FY08. The euthanasia of adult cats is still an issue and need to be addressed to reduce this number. An analysis showed behavioral issues and the type of intake not just feral cats make up the euthanasia adult cat numbers. Adopters will take dogs with behavioral issues and work to retrain them but do not feel that adult cats can be retrained.

Public Relations and Volunteer Activity – Laura Rizer

The next volunteer orientation is March 2nd at the Shelter. The annual volunteer meetings will be separated. The Dog volunteer meeting was two weeks ago. The Cat meeting is tomorrow night. Two new programs being implemented are: Nature Walks with Dogs (dogs being walked together) and Shelter Dog Social Hour will start in late March.

The Shelter will team up with Parks and Rec. to do a Summer Animal Camp. It will be held at different schools throughout the county the last week of June. They will hold two camps (2 hour duration) a day for an entire week. The number of campers will increase from 8 in 2010 to over 400. Two ACO are going to help with presentations. One is a licensed rehabilitator for opossums and the other is reptile specialist.

The Mobile Adoption Program will resume March 3rd, every Thursday, 3-7 p.m., at the Unleashed Store (high end Petco store) in Cascades Market Place.

Subcommittee Reports

Reducing Euthanasia Rates: Mr. Popejoy

A report on possible ways to reduce euthanasia rates was handed out. Mr. Popejoy went over the suggestions and discussion was held. Several suggestions had not been reviewed because the assigned subcommittee member has left the subcommittee. The discussion on the suggestion of use of foster homes as held. Animals receive an evaluation to see if there are issues which could be addressed in a foster home without creating a safety issue. Two problems with foster homes are: Foster to Adopt and finding the right fit between animal and foster placement because foster families seem to have very set parameters for what they will accept. Many of the dog intakes would not be suitable for foster

placement. Expanding the foster program, for cats as well as dogs, would be welcomed especially in the Eastern and Southern parts of the County. A push will be made for new foster families with the start of kitten season (end of March). The physical location of the Shelter impacts all aspects of the Department's programs.

When there is good candidate, the Shelter reaches out to rescue partners and this gets better results than a general request to partner. There are about 30-40 rescue partners now.

Setting a goal on a percentage reduction is very difficult because the Department cannot regulate what comes into the Shelter. A better way would be to investigate ways to keep animals out of the Shelter and increase the RTO rate. A presentation will be held on the staffs outreach work on Lost and Found.

Cat licensing and amending the Law for the use of microchips to be used in lieu of tags were additional suggestions.

Community Outreach: Dr. Sinn, Ms. Lewis - None

Laws & Ordinances: Mr. Popejoy, Ms. Dekker, Ms. Lewis

The proposed revision of the Nuisance Ordinance was handed out. It shows the wording after taking into account several issues raised by County Admin. and the County Attorney. This issue to be placed on the March agenda.

The subcommittee met and suggests that our Ordinance be brought in line with State Code as to the definition of Kennel. This will remediate any legal problem with the two being out-of-sync. Officer Miller will check to see if County Admin and County Attorney feel that there is manpower to complete this request. After this, 808 can be completely reviewed for other changes.

Animals in Emergency – Dr. Strickland - Absent

Unfinished Business - None

New Business - None

Committee Member Informational Reports

At Large – Ms. Donna Lewis - None

Blue Ridge – Ms. Kathy Brice - Absent

Broad Run – Ms. Martha Rice - None

Requested info on the dogs (3) caught in the house fire. Ms. Rice completed a ride along with an ACO and was impressed at the amount of information available to the ACO's when in the field.

Catoctin – Ms. Joanne Dekker - None

Dulles – Vacant

Leesburg – Dr. Mike Strickland, D.V.M. - Absent

Potomac – Dr. Leslie Sinn, D.V.M. - None

Sterling – Mr. Paul Dodaro - Absent

Sugarland Run – Mr. Paul Popejoy - None

Adjournment 9:12 p.m.

Next meeting, Wednesday, March 23, 2011